THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (e) The Overseas Indian Centre at Dubai would provide medical, legal and financial counseling etc. to the overseas Indian workers in the Gulf countries. At present, there is no proposal to set up another such centre in the Gulf region.

Exploitation of Indian women in Gulf countries

1714. SHRI K. CHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the reports of cases of Indian women workers being sexually exploited in the Gulf countries;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the actions Government have taken to protect the female workers?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) and (b) As per the information received from the Indian Missions in Gulf countries, 35 cases during the year 2005 and 20 cases during 2006 have been reported in United Arab Emirates and one case has been reported in Oman during 2006. The Missions have provided necessary assistance to the victims including arranging their repartriation to India.

(c) Based on the report of CGI, Dubai, registration certificate of one recruiting agent has been cancelled under section 14 of the Emigration Act, 1983. Taking into account the vulnerability of women and the recommendation of the National Commission for Women, instructions were issued on 20.11.2003 to all the Protectors of Emigrants for not granting emigration clearance to women below the age of thirty years for employment abroad as housemaids/domestic workers. Further, the employment contract is required to be mandatorily attested by the concerned Indian Mission in all cases of housemaids/domestic workers.

University for NRI students

1715. PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether his Ministry has received representation asking to set up a University for NRI students;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) to (c) The Government views the establishment of a university for Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) and Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) favourably. The proposal is under consideration of the Government.